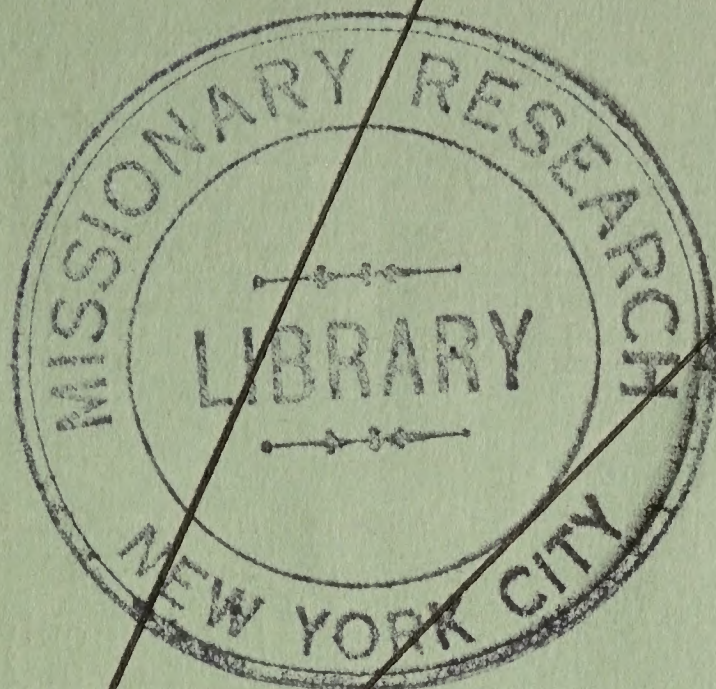


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POWER

Beyond Dreams

POWER BEYOND DREAMS

THE followers of Christ are today facing an unsolved problem: How can the power of the spirit meet and overcome the fresh outbreaks of brutality which startle our world today? War cannot invalidate the Christ. Yet Christ Himself was finally driven to the necessity of defending his conception of life by giving up his life itself.

Looking beyond the carnage and despair of war, earnest Christians are beginning to realize that the ultimate outcome may well be a more conscious dependence on God. One thing is clear: the two ways of life can only come to grips within a human soul, or in a corporate body of human souls. In this contest the rewards seem always to go to the side that seeks the conquest. He that has visible power gets ostensible control. And the side that gives, that serves, that forgets itself, finds its reward often hidden in the enriched lives of its companions.

If we had common sense enough to take God at His word we should know that there is something here which frequently escapes the eye, but has a most significant importance. God did not chance to make the world as it is. It may seem to minister to the masterful ambitions of the man who would control it. But every effort toward mastery carries with it the seeds to disappointment.

The power of Christ's way of life is measured in terms of service and sacrifice, depending upon those who love it and give it outlet. He who undertakes this seeks nothing for himself, and so cannot be disappointed. His concern is the welfare of others. He has chosen the path that is always open to advance; for those who are in need are so many that there are no limits to service in the likeness of the Christ.

That transforming power of Christ which bids men lift up their eyes to new hope and conviction has been the foundation on which the missionary outreach of the Christian church has been built. For more than a century its missionaries have tried to reveal the many shades and colors of the gospel in

by Leslie Bates Moss

its application to life. Thousands, even millions, of the inhabitants of lands across the sea have turned from their old and all but outworn philosophies, which offer no element of hope to their followers, and have responded to the Christian message by staking their all on the results. This they have done in spite of the fact that they live in the midst of civilizations where deviation from the accepted normality of life is punished by death, by disgrace, by loss of economic position in the social group.

Christianity in many instances has had a desperate struggle to secure recognition of its Lord. Missionaries have had much difficulty in dissociating themselves from the civilization of the West from which they came. In China they seemed entirely a part of the outside world, a fact which China did not relish. Professor Hsu, who spent some months here in 1939, tells us that now the picture is changed. Missionaries have always tried to show that the cup of cold water and the ministry of service is of the essence of Christ's way of life. In the midst of the war situation the power of their devotion has gone far to persuade China to a new acceptance of this different way.

Christ has been planted in the midst of the outcastes of India. Whole villages are seeking the hope He brings, not because of the perfect preaching of some highly trained preacher but because in village after village the new way of life has transformed living. Bishop Azariah tells of a group of boys who came to him asking to be permitted to join the church. He knew them from earlier years, when they had attended Christian schools but had not taken the Christian doctrine seriously. When he asked them why they were coming now, they replied that it was because of the church in a certain village. "But," said the Bishop, mystified, "the pastor of that church was just telling me of the weakness of those people." "Yes," replied the boys, "but you did not know that village a few years ago, and we did. If Christ can change people like that we want to know Him."

Did You Ever Stop To Think

Relief

THAT it was Christian missionaries who first brought China any relief from the century-long ravages of floods. They set up modern agricultural colleges which have brought economic advance to many farmers of China, and promoted reforestation of the denuded hills and mountains. They organized relief measures to take care of the distressed. They have stayed by their posts through the invasion of Japanese troops, and by their support and friendly and sympathetic service have won a new love and admiration for Christ.

Education

THAT it was the Christian missionary who started all modern education in Asia and Africa. A totally new comprehension of world relationships and much of the outstanding leadership in many lands has derived its stimulus from Christian sources.

International order

THAT—"In the missionary enterprise the Christian movement makes an indispensable contribution to the international order. The true missionary comes as a friend, not a ruler or exploiter. Disinterested service makes plain God's love for all. In view of the present international situation, the value of the international character of the missionary movement is more than usually apparent." (Madras Meeting.)

Evangelism

THAT in the midst of the far extended and continual propaganda which is being waged by press, radio and underground channels for communism, various forms of militarism, and secularized attitudes toward life, the Christian church is steadily evidencing in many ways the powerful change for good which Christ brings into the life that accepts Him.

Cooperation

THAT in India, American and German missionaries have worked side by side with British Christians to demonstrate that the Christian message

has power in transforming the degrading conditions of poverty and outcaste existence which not only mitigates the bitterness many Indians have for imperialism but is teaching them how to take hold of their problems themselves.

THAT by its healing ministry the Christian missionary has offset much of the disruption which modern commercial exploitation has caused in the life of primitive Africa. And that today the chief agencies working for a fuller development of African personality, so that he may benefit by the riches of his home land, are the Christian churches.

Healing

THAT the Christian missionary has been responsible for providing a written form of language for large numbers of the human race. He has made available the scriptures while teaching these peoples how to read and also to write. Today it is a missionary who is doing more than any other one person to stir an interest in literacy among the hundreds of millions of illiterates in this world. And missionaries in many lands are joining afresh in this crusade against ignorance with new and simplified methods.

Scriptures

WHAT an astonishing place of leadership Christians have taken in many countries of the Orient, because by training under Christian auspices they have discovered a purpose to serve their fellowmen in the manner of the Christ.

Leadership

HOW much God wanted His children to know and love Him—so much that He sent His only Son that they might have life—and He has been seeking men every day who would continue to carry the Good News. More than half of the human family still await release from the concentration camps of despair.

The unfinished task

YOURS IS THE POWER

This represents the quality of missionary life and work through more than a century. The thousands of lives who have responded to the call to carry the message abroad have spread the contagion to tens of thousands of young men and women who are carrying the torch among their own people today with courage, vision, and abandon.

The International Missionary Conference at Madras showed us the thirst of other nations for fellowship with Christians of lands beyond their own frontiers. In December 1938 representatives from the churches of sixty-nine different countries met to study the present needs and opportunities for the Christian mission. Those from younger churches came from lands where they know the sting of persecution. In some of these countries the prevailing war conditions subjected the little groups of Christian followers to the severest tests. Were they discouraged about Christianity? Not they. A tremendous demand was upon them—how to declare the unsearchable riches of God to poverty stricken humanity.

Out of those seventeen days of counselling together at Madras there emerged the striking realization of the elemental and fundamental need for a world-wide fellowship among Christians. It was borne upon all present that only as we are conscious of standing shoulder to shoulder, working together, can we have the strength and insight to carry Christ in all His beauty to the starved lives on this earth who know not its glory.

God is still performing his modern miracles of transformation. The water of eternal life is relieving the famished souls in China seared by war. Families and villages in India are finding a new sparkle in life and fresh zest in the battle with nature when they find our Lord. The African, lured from the bush by the industrial establishment with which the white man is demolishing the primitive traditions of a thousand years, finds that the gospel of Christ develops new powers within himself and his tribe for stability and growth of the spirit.

Yours is the power to give direction to tomorrow's world. It is a strange and exciting power, and you hold it in your hand. "What is that in thy hand?" In these words the Bible record challenges our recognition of the glory of commonplace instruments. With Moses it was the staff that kept him daily company. With us it may be any common commodity of our daily life.

Do you ever stop to look at a coin as you take it out to make some purchase? It is your life you hold there in your hand. You have worked and given of your energy in return for these coins. Look beyond the coins in your hand—realize that through them you can go to the ends of the earth. Through their use you can help Christ transform those burdens on men's backs all across the world into new opportunity for life.

Take those ordinary pieces of metal you handle every day, put them in the hands of your missionary society, and follow them with interest and prayer. As you discover their possibilities to bring about changed life, you will have such a thrill as millions crave. You will have thrown your weight into the scales for a new world of tomorrow. *Yours is the power—power beyond the dreams of man!*

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